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Aleta Cheal
35548 Oakdale
Livonia, MI 48154

Dear Ms. Cheal:

This is in reply to your letter addressed to FDA Commissioner Jane Henney, M.D., in support of a petition from the Center for Science in Public Interest and other organizations concerning the use of antibiotics in animal feeds.

FDA has this Citizen Petition (99P-0485) under consideration. The Agency issued a tentative response in 1999, and we will send the final response as soon as possible. Because of the complex nature of the action requested in the petition, it requires careful and thorough scientific, legal, and policy consultation, analysis and coordination within the Agency. I am forwarding your comments to be included with others the Agency has received on the petition. You may be interested in some of the activities the Agency is conducting in the antimicrobial resistance area. This information is posted on the FDA/Center for Veterinary Medicine Home Page on Internet at: <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/fda/mappgs/antitoc.html>. If you are unable to access the Internet, I will be happy to send paper copies of some of the key documents on that page.

Thank you for sharing your views on this important issue.

Sincerely yours,

Linda A. Grassie
Public Information Specialist
FDA/Center for Veterinary Medicine

Cc: HFA-305 (Docket Number 99P-0485/CP ✓
HF-40 (Kristy Moran) -- TRAC# 00-4761
HFV-1 (OD#32)
HFV-12
LGRASSIE: 8/1/00

99P-0485

LET4

Jane Henney, MD
Commissioner, US FDA
5600 Fishers Ave
Room 1471
Rockville MD 20857

July 10th, 2000

Dear Dr. Henney,

I am writing in support of a recent petition presented to the FDA by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), the Union of Concerned Scientists, and other organizations, urging the FDA to rescind already-approved uses of medically important antibiotics in livestock feed. As I'm sure you are aware, antibiotics are commonly added to livestock feed to boost growth at a lower cost and to prevent disease. Both of these issues, in most cases, could be solved by improved husbandry practices and sanitation on farms, rather than indiscriminate use of antibiotics. This use endangers human health by increasing the incidence of antibiotic resistance among bacteria that infect humans.

Scientists, health organizations, and governments all over the world support limiting the unnecessary use of antibiotics to ensure their lasting effectiveness. The World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, both greatly respected scientific organizations, have been calling for a ban on subtherapeutic uses of antibiotics in livestock feed since 1997. As early as 1969, the Swann Committee in the United Kingdom recommended that antibiotics be divided into "feed" and "therapeutic" classes, and that the "feed" class not include drugs that are used therapeutically in humans or animals. According to HR 3266, a bill currently pending in Congress, all developed countries in the world, with the exception of the United States and Canada, currently follow such recommendations. Many European nations have banned the subtherapeutic use of antibiotics, and in December 1998, the European Union banned adding any human use antibiotics to animal feed.

I urge you to ban the use of any medically important antibiotics as feed additives immediately. About 1/2 of all antibiotics used in the US today are used in livestock, and most of those are used to promote growth rather than to treat ill animals. Your action could have a significant impact on the long term effectiveness of these important drugs.

I hope that the FDA will respond to this issue quickly, to ensure the safety of human health before the situation becomes desperate. I look forward to your response.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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